

## **PART 2. DEFINITIONS**

### **Rule 2.1 Specific Terms**

The following definitions apply to these rules:

- (a) Convenience fee is a fee charged in connection with electronic filing that is in addition to regular filing fees. A Convenience Fee charged by the County Clerk will be considered as a court cost.
- (b) County clerk means the Fort Bend County Clerk.
- (c) "Digitized signature" means a graphic image of a handwritten signature.
- (d) Document means a pleading, plea, motion, application, request, exhibit, brief, memorandum of law, paper, or other instrument in paper form or electronic form. The term does not include court orders.
- (e) Electronic filing is a process by which a filer files a court document with the county clerk's office by means of an online computer transmission of the document in electronic form. For purposes of these rules, the process does not include the filing of faxed documents which is described as the "electronic filing of documents" in Section 51.801, Government Code.
- (f) Electronic filing service provider (EFSP) is a business entity that provides electronic filing services and support to its customers (filers). An attorney or law firm may act as an EFSP.
- (g) "Electronic order" means a computerized, non-paper court order that a judge signs by applying his or her digitized signature to the order. A digitized signature is a graphic image of the judge's handwritten signature.
- (h) Electronic service is a method of serving a document upon a party in a case by electronically transmitting the document to that party's e-mail address.
- (i) Electronically file means to file a document by means of electronic filing.
- (j) Electronically serve means to serve a document by means of electronic service.
- (k) Filer means a person who files a document, including an attorney.
- (l) Party means a person appearing in any case or proceeding, whether represented or appearing pro se, or an attorney of record for a party in any case or proceeding.
- (m) Regular filing fees are those filing fees charged in connection with traditional filing.

(n) Rules are the Fort Bend County Local Rules of the County Courts concerning the Electronic Filing of Documents.

(o) “Traditional court order” means a court order that is on paper.

(p) Traditional filing is a process by which a filer files a paper document with a clerk or a judge.

**Rule 2.2 Application to Pro Se Litigants**

The term counsel shall apply to an individual litigant in the event a party appears pro se.